The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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MORNING.

"His compassions fail not. They are new every morning."—LAM. iii. 22, 23.

Oh, timely happy, timely wise,
Hearts that with rising morn arise!
Eyes that the beam celestial view,
Which evermore makes all things new.

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life and power and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see;
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

As for some dear familiar strain
Untired we ask, and ask again,
Ever in its melodious store
Finding a spell unheard before,

Such is the bliss of souls serene
When they have sworn and steadfast mean,
Counting the cost, in all to espy
Their God, in all themselves deny.

Oh, could we learn that sacrifice,
What lights would all around us rise!
How would our hearts with wisdom talk
Along life's dullest, dreariest walk!

We need not bid for cloistered cell
Our neighbor and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky.

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask,—
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

Seek we no more: content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease,
As heaven shall bid them, come and go,—
The secret this of rest below.

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love
Fit us for perfect rest above,
And help us this and every day
To live more nearly as we pray.

—*John Keble.*

CHRIST'S EMPHASIS ON LIFE.

"Cut it down: why cumbereth it the ground?" LUKE xiii. 7.

This parable of the husbandman considering what to do with the barren fig-tree is one of the best known of Christ's parables, and yet the point of it is curiously misunderstood. It is commonly taken simply as part of a supposed great Christian warning to be prepared *to die*, while its real lesson is to be more prepared *to live*. Do you see? The world has just reversed the true emphasis about life and death. The world puts the emphasis on death: that is the great consideration for the Christian. Christ put the emphasis on life: that is what *he* was constantly pressing home to men; and, even

when he *does* speak of death, it is almost always simply to bring home more forcibly the importance of life.

Look at this contrast for a moment. Suppose you go to the average revival meeting, or indeed (in most churches) to any ordinary service at which some special effort at converting men is being made. What is it that is most dwelt upon? Nine times out of ten, it is death: that we have got to die; that you *may* die to-night. "Are you prepared?" it is asked; and it always means, Are you prepared to die? Why, to hear the appeals that are made about this, one would think that, if death could only be warded off, it would not matter much how a man lives!

But now call to mind Christ's teachings. I do not mean, of course, that Christ never speaks of death as a solemn thing; but *that* is not where he put the emphasis. It is life that Christ was constantly dwelling upon,—the solemnity of life, the duties of life, the great opportunities of life. There is one place where Christ put that very matter of dying to-night: that "certain rich man" whose flocks and herds brought forth so abundantly that he said to himself, now he needn't labor any more, now he had all that life needed, now he could devote himself to eating and drinking and having a general good time. "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." Well,—but what next? The common moral just there would be, "Now what will become of that man's soul?" But that is not Christ's moral. All that Christ says is, "Now whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" It is not a lost soul that he points to, but simply a wasted life,—piling up what had nothing really to do with living,—all coming to the perfect point in that grand word, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth!" And you get the same lesson from another direction in this parable of the text. He figures a man whose life is worthless and useless. Now the common moral about such a man is, *Is he fit to die?* Christ's parable puts it that that is about the only thing he is fit for. It is the barren tree which is the one that is fit to be cut down. "Cut it down," he says: "why cumbereth it the ground?" And, if he consents that it shall be "let alone one year longer," it is not in order that then it may be more ready to be cut down, but that perchance it may at length begin to bring forth fruit, and so be worthy to remain and live.

This is not a mere change in the interpretation of some old text: it is something that touches the very heart of life. It is life that we want to think more of. All those common appeals to the fear of death are in the wrong direction. Why, if there is one thing that Christ was constantly putting to men, it was *not* to fear death. He does not make *more* of death than people had done before, but *less*. He treats it as a mere passing on of life from one stage to another. Why, so little account does he make of dying that he hardly ever speaks of it, except as falling asleep. I do not know that I have ever heard Christ's feeling about it better exemplified than in an answer which was once given by our dear old friend, Dr. Bartol. As I have heard it, some very orthodox clergyman, who was arguing with our friend, said to him at last, "Doctor, do you expect to die?" Dr. Bartol replied,—and can't you think how his face would light up as he said it?—"Why, no. Do you?" That is the true feeling. It may not be easy to reach: I know it is not. I do not want to make light of that great change or of the pain and sorrow which it often has to bring,—sometimes *so* terrible, such a sore rending of the heart-strings, that it seems as if all the light of earth were going out. I do not want to preach any hard stoicism, just trying to steer itself into indifference. But do not let us make more of that change than there really is to it. Especially do not let us talk of it as if it had some tremendous moral significance. The moral significance is all in life. Death is merely a change, an incident in the physical being,—often a very painful incident, if you will; though I think all testimony tells you that the painfulness is immensely exaggerated. Altogether, it is one of the things which arise out of our being domiciled to the body, and so having our place in the great sweep of these material laws and forces which make up this present universe. But, as for moral meaning, except what we put into it, it seems to me as if the great God of all worlds was constantly showing us how small a matter

death is in his great providence. These mighty forces,—flood, fire, cyclone, sometimes sweeping men away like flies,—these common accidents and sicknesses which take away now the good man, now the bad man, now the aged, now the youth or maiden or child,—it is not that the world's great providence is meaningless, but that these things are his physical meanings,—as purely physical, as devoid of any moral element, as the force of gravitation or a snow-storm or an eclipse. His moral meaning is in the life of man, in this capacity for thought, in this strange sense of duty, in this mysterious consciousness of personality, this sense of "I" and "you," this wonderful faculty of friendship and love, this irrepressible reaching out toward God, this wide instinct—ever rising here and there into a clear, undoubting certainty—of life being something that is to live and last. Here is God's moral meaning,—in life; and it was here that his holiest, his Christ, was ever putting it for us, and here that we want to put it for one another and for ourselves.

So the true question for man to ask of his soul is not, "Am I fit to die?" but, "Am I worthy to live?"—not, "Am I thinking enough of death?" but, "Am I thinking enough of life?" For it is no counsel of easy-going carelessness that I am putting. I am not preaching to have less thought or care about death, and to leave the matter so. No; but that that thought, that care, that sense of a deep and awful mystery with which all look at death when they think of it, shall be transferred to life. Then, in that spirit, go forth, feeling each new day something of what it is to be alive, —alive in God's great world, in the beginning of a life that is to live on forever. Do a strong manly or womanly part; accept the mercies that come with a glad thankfulness; take hold of work and duty with a firm, hearty grip; in all life's intercourse, whether of home or of the world, fulfil a loving, helpful part. And then shall life go strengthening, greatening, all the way; and there shall be no death, but only, some day, just as the laws of being bring it, a change, a passing on, and the unspoken word "to come up higher" into the next and finer stage of this wonderful *Life!—Brooke Herford.*

Written for the Cheerful Letter.

THE STILL HOUR.

EVENING PRAYER.

Send help from above, O Father,
For life's burden is heavy to bear:
When the night grows dark about me,
I long for thy loving care.

Send peace from above, O Father.
Thou givest thy loved ones rest;
And, weary with striving and toiling,
To rest in thy peace is best.

Send strength from above, O Father;
And, when the new day is begun,
I will lift up my load, and hasten
And finish my task undone.

Send light from above, O Father;
For in darkness, day by day,
My footsteps have failed and faltered,
And rocky and steep the way.

Send down thy spirit, O Father:
Weak, erring, and full of sin,
I would open the gates of the temple,
Let thy spirit enter in.

Whenever this source of unrest exists, there is no remedy but in restoring the lost proportion of the soul; by disciplining the affections into a greatness suitable to the control of so critical a judgment and so scrupulous a conscience. In the absence of anything of nobler scope, limited loves, particular enthusiasms, mere fancies of the mind, be they only innocent, are a great good. The active votary of any harmless object is better than the passive critic of all; and the dullest man, who lives only to collect shells or coins, is worthier than the shrewdest, who lives only to laugh at him. And if his pursuit, instead of fastening on a mere dead product of nature or history, attach itself to some human object, if it be pride of a father in a child or the guardianship of a mother by her son, it redeems life from the curse of sterility and enriches it with many spots of beauty. It imparts strength for wholesome self-denial, and smooths out the hard lines upon the features with the softening touch of pity and of joy.

But it is only in contrast with *no love* that we can thus accept *any* love as good.

Love is a good, not on its own account,

but on account of the excellence to which its clings; not because it sets the heart at one with *something*, but with something noble, true, and holy. . . .

All finite loves are only *half-born*, wandering in a poor twilight, unknowing of their peace and power till they lie within the encompassing and glorifying love of God. The soul, drawn out by filial sympathy with his infinitude and blended by aspiration with his absolute perfection, sees the inner orbits of dependent good precisely as they are, fair and true in themselves, but borrowing a more solemn beauty from their relation to the whole, . . . God is the element in which they live. Though they were to perish, he would endure. While all else rises and flows, he is, and ever stays. In him alone, but in him forever, there is rest.—*James Martineau, in "Hours of Thought on Sacred Things."*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

Postage on magazines and all periodicals (weighing less than four pounds), 1 cent for four ounces; on bound books, 1 cent for two ounces. *Paper* books are now sent by mail at the same rate as magazines, *when issued periodically*.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 19 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Old correspondents will please address the members to whom they have formerly written. In order to receive books from the Cambridge Branch, it will be necessary henceforth to send a reference with the *first* request.

Educational.

"Word-book English Spelling," Swinton; "Practice Words," Westlake; "Spelling Book," Hazen; "New Language Lessons," Swinton; "Composition and Rhetoric," Hart; "Analytical Grammar"; "English Grammar"; "First Lessons in English," Welsh; "School Grammar," Wells; "Primary Spelling Book" Worcester; "Pronouncing Spelling Book," Worcester; "Franklin Primer"; "Fourth Reader," Franklin; "Fourth Reader," Stickney; "Fifth Reader," Swinton; "First, Second, and Third Readers," Monroe; "First Reader," Appleton; "American Educational Reader, No. 5"; "Fourth Reader," Appleton; "Fifth Reader," Hillard; "Young Folks' History of the United States," Higginson; "Outlines of the World's History," Swinton; "Child's History of England," Dickens; "History of the United States," Scudder; "History of the United States," Barnes; "Third Book of History"; "School History of England," Dickens; "History of England," Anderson; "United States," Willson; "The Discovery of America," Gilman; "Primary Geography," Swinton; "Our World"; "Brief

Course in Geography," Warren; "School Geography," Harper; "Advanced Geography," Potter; "Theory of Physics," Ames; "Experimental Physics," Stone; "Natural History," Ware-Smellie; "Book of Nature" (Plants); "Natural History and Language"; "Physiology and Hygiene," Hutchison; "Physiology and Hygiene," Dalton; "Elementary Physics," Stuart; "Rudimentary Architecture"; "Primary Arithmetic," Franklin; "Common School Arithmetic," Chase; "School Algebra," Wentworth; "Written Arithmetic," Franklin; "Arithmetic," Peck; "Second Arithmetic," Wheeler; "Elementary Dictionary," Worcester; "Primary Dictionary," Webster; "Manual of Phonography"; Ollendorff's "Method of Learning French"; "French Dictionary," Masson; "Musical Grammar"; "Second Music Reader."

Juvenile.

"What the Seven did"; "Thine, not Mine," story for boys; "Editha's Burglar," F. H. Burnett; "Other Folks at Home"; "Young Folks' Opera"; "Little Alex," Susan Coolidge; "Arabian Nights"; "The Sea and its Wonders"; "Crackers for Christmas"; "The Wonderful Bag"; "Lilliput Levee"; "A Shaggy Dog"; "The King of the Golden River," Ruskin; "Rhyme and Reason"; "Katie Summers"; "Child World"; "Grandpa's House"; "Jolly Good Times"; "The Fairy Egg"; "Four, and What they did"; "The Crofton Boys," Harriet Martineau; "Mary Bell," Jacob Abbott; "The Boys' King Arthur"; "Hymns for Infant Minds," Jane Taylor; "Pollie and Jack"; "Ribbon Stories"; "Paws and Claws"; "The Seasons"; "Under the Lilacs," L. M. Alcott; "A Boy's Adventures in the Wilds of Australia"; "Lilliput Legends"; "Seven Autumn Leaves from Fairy Land"; "The Last Inhabitants of an Old House"; "Posies for Children"; "Boys of Other Countries," Bayard Taylor; "Little Lays for Little Folk"; "Stories for the Household," Andersen; "Seven Little Sisters," Andrews; "The Red Mountain of Alaska" (unbound); "What Katy Did."

Fiction.

"In Varying Moods," Harraden; "Amadeus"; "The Cuckoo Clock"; "Gascogne"; "The Elect Lady," MacDonald; "Rip Van Winkle," Irving; "The Snow Image," Hawthorne; "The Schönberg-Cotta Family"; "Men, Women, and Ghosts," E. S. Phelps; "The Head of Medusa," Fleming; and the following *unbound* stories: "Proverb Stories," L. M. Alcott; "Ramona"; "Fated to be Free," Jean Ingelow; "Mirage"; "Christie Johnstone"; "The Truth about Clement Kerr"; "Theophilus Trent"; "Their Canoe Trip"; "Afterglow"; "Queen Money."

Miscellaneous.

"Essays," Bacon; "Culture and Anarchy," Matthew Arnold; "The Importance of Habits"; Lamb's "Tales from Shakspeare"; "Essays on Political Economy"; "Sir Walter Scott," R. H. Hutton; "Robespierre, a Tragedy"; Macaulay's "Miscellanies" (4 vols.); *Ladies' Home Jaurnal*, September, 1890, to August, 1891, inclusive; *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1894, to November, 1895; *Century*, November, 1891, to November, 1892; "History of a Mouthful of Bread"; "Poems of Natural History," Mary Howitt; "Animals of the Bible"; "Christ an Example for the Young"; "Salvation Here and Hereafter," Service; "Sermons," Robertson; "Sunshine and Starlight"; "With General Sheridan in Lee's Last Campaign"; "Heroes and Kings: Stories from the Greek"; "Travels in the Chinese Empire"; "My Farm of Edgewood"; "Flute and Piano Duets"; *Art Interchange*" (2 vols.); "The Private Purse," Hall; "Life and Letters of Miss Sedgwick"; "Geraldine: A Poem."

The Lowell Branch offer the following books (address Miss A. F. Anderson, 31 Anne Street, Lowell): Andrews and Stoddard's "Latin Grammar"; Fasquelle's "French Grammar"; Andrews's "First Lessons in Latin"; "First Steps in Exercises in Articulation"; Swinton's "New English Grammar"; Reed's "Graded English Grammar"; Farrar's "Arithmetical Problems"; Willson's "United States History"; "Mount Washington in Winter"; "Life and Letters of Emily Judson," Kendrick; "Memoir and Poems of Lucretia Davidson," Miss Sedgwick; "Memoir and Poems of Margaret Davidson," Washington Irving; "Life Thoughts," Beecher; "Sermons for the People," Huntington; "Sybil Knox," Dr. E. E. Hale; *Magazine of American Art*, 1887.

Miss Ruth Randall, Adams Street, Quincy, Mass., offers the following books: "The American Printer," Mackellar; "Essentials of English Grammar," W. D. Whitney; "Orations of Cicero" (in Latin); "Elements of Algebra," Bourdon; "Composition and Rhetoric," Hart; "Manual of Phonography," Benn Pitman; Ploetz's "Easy French Method"; "English Grammar," Harvey; Bradbury's "Elementary Geometry."

REQUESTS.

Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from: —

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Jamestown, Chautauqua County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Mrs. E. Jones, Alexander City, Alabama, is particularly desirous to receive Sanford's "Arithmetic" and Monteith's "Lessons in Geography."

Rev. S. G. Appleget, 106 Beech Street, Yonkers, New York, writes: "Could you oblige me with a copy of 'The Mycenæan Age,' Crothers's 'Members of One Body,' Charles F. Dole's 'Catechism on Citizenship?' I should indeed and double deed be more than grateful."

Sanford's "Higher Arithmetic," Anderson's "History of England," "Zoölogy," Waddy's "Rhetoric." Will be so thankful for even one or all of the books, for my daughter. Mrs. N. L. Turnbull, Young Harris, Towns County, Georgia.

Mrs. Sallie B. Jones, Cabool, Missouri, asks for "Ben-Hur," "Wide, Wide World," "Old Curiosity Shop," and *Harper's Bazar.* Any reading received will be passed on to others.

"The Scarlet Letter" is asked for by Mrs. J. M. Carter, 326 Third Street, Olympia, Washington, and Mrs. Olive Reed, Ogalalla, Nebraska.

"Blithedale Romance" and "Scarlet Letter" are asked for by Mrs. Ada B. Tatum, Tatum, Virginia.

Mrs. S. B. Dillon, 201 East Third Street, Hastings, Nebraska, would like *Youth's Companion* and Ray's "Third Part Arithmetic."

Mrs. J. L. Witt, 808 Main Street, Lynchburg, Virginia, asks for "Wide, Wide World."

Mrs. Ellen M. Wright, Stratford, New Hampshire, will be glad to receive "A Noble Life."

Henry C. Holcomb, Boundary Street, Olympia, Washington, will be glad of "Sociology: The Growth, Welfare, and Social Relations of Man," by John Fiske, and "Evolution: The Origin of Worlds and the Ascent of Life," by Rev. M. J. Savage.

Miss Kate Richeson, Allwood, Virginia, asks for any of Hawthorne's works or "Norwood," by H. W. Beecher.

Mrs. Bettie Craddock, Vinton, Virginia, asks for reading for herself and children. Mrs. Craddock is a widow with twelve children.

George Wolcott, Foster, San Diego County, California, a crippled soldier, living thirty-five miles out in the country, will be thankful for anything to read.

Mrs. M. A. Leach, Midkiff, Louisiana, asks for school books for children from seven to sixteen years. Readers and spelling-books particularly desired.

"Heavenly Campfire" is desired by Mrs. W. H. Green, Fairhaven, Vermont.

Several requests are necessarily postponed, because sent to the Editor instead of to the Secretary of the Book Club.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*Please send all materials for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.*]

BIOGRAPHICAL GAME.

This game is played by two or more people. Each person is provided with paper and pencil. A letter is decided upon, and then each one writes in a vertical line all the names of historical people he can think of whose names begin with the letter chosen. Fictitious characters are not allowed, but Biblical, historical, or mythological persons are in order; but they must be dead, no living characters are permitted. Ten minutes are allowed for the writing. Then one person reads aloud his list, one name at a time, erasing it after reading, and placing by that word a number corresponding to the number of people who have *not* placed it on their list. Every one having that name counts the same as the reader. This is done in turn until all have read their list, when the numbers are added up to see who has beaten.

PUZZLES.

1. Read the following sentence without changing the order of the words, so that it will make sense:—

It was and I said not or.

2. Make a rhyme out of the following sentence without changing the words;—

There was an old lady, and she was as deaf as a post.

CHARADES.

1.

My first is in thrush, but not in wren,
My second in paper, but not in pen.
My third is not in sunshine, but rain,
My fourth not found in chaff, but in grain.
My fifth is in either, not in both;
And my sixth not in willing, but in loath.
My whole is the cynosure of all eyes,
When all are competing to win the prize.

E. P. P.

2.

FROM AN OLD MANUSCRIPT.

I saw it on a lonely ocean shore,
I heard its voice amid the ocean's roar,
Then looking far, where smoother waters flow,
I saw it in the sun's reflected glow.

'Twas starry night; and oh, how fair and good,
Poised on Orion's princely brow, it stood.
And glorious Ursa Major took it round
About the cynosure of northern bound.

I saw it in the morning, when the light
First paled the starry watches of the night,
And noon revealed it doubly fair again;
But evening came, I searched for it in vain.

I searched for it o'er valley, hill, and plain,
But found it not, nor on the briny main.
O wondrous emblem of eternity!
Thy being shows no end: to mortal eye
Thou dwellest on the border of obscurity.

Answers to puzzles in August number:—

CHARADE.

Cryptogram.

SYNCOPATION.

Dog.

AN AVIARY.

1. Kite. 2. Swallow. 3. Thrush. 4. Parrot. 5. Wren. 6. Goose. 7. Crow. 8. Crane. 9. Gull. 10. Turkey. 11. Marten. 12. Bat. 13. Duck. 14. Owl. 15. Bobolink. 16. Canary. 17. Phœbe.

CONUNDRUMS.

1.

The *Lily* must droop, and its leaves decay;
The *Rose* from its stem must sever;
And the *Shamrock* and *Thistle* must fade away.
But the *Stars* will shine forever.

2.

The grass is full of blades, the trees are shooting, and the bull-rushes out.

3.

For Adams's Express Company.

4.

Because it is ten to one if you get it.

ANAGRAMS.

1. Delicate. 2. Nebraska. 3. Advertise. 4. Laughing. 5. Separate. 6. Delaware.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[*All articles for this department should be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

OBEDIENCE.

Let us recognize that there are two sorts of obedience, — deference, or the desire to please, and servility, or fear of pain. And they are not interchangeable. Where the last has been established, it is very difficult for the first to be substituted.

There is something so awe-inspiring in the idea of human individuality, the expression of some unique part of the universal spirit of life, that one should be deeply touched when there is a free surrender of any portion of this individuality to us. There is something mysteriously beautiful in such a yielding. Should so lovely a thing be lightly sacrificed to harsh egotism? The great duty we should rather enjoin upon ourselves is to make obedience pleasurable, to prevent the feeling of humiliation and pain that is the essential accompaniment of an enforced yielding, and cultivate, at any trouble, the grace of an affectionate docility, which is very far removed from the "absolute obedience" usually commended.

There are many respects in which our civilization is so unnatural and so difficult that a child's life is from the beginning a constant series of checks. Many instinctive desires that could be gratified under other circumstances must be thwarted because conditions forbid. But let us be as gentle as we can in initiating this young creature into worldly usages. At first only such impulses as tend to his own injury should be thwarted, that the check may stand out in sharp contrast with his usual freedom of movement, and also that there may grow up in his mind an idea that a command is not an arbitrary exertion on the part of the stronger, but a kindly ordinance, having in view his own welfare. "Issue as few edicts as possible," is a good rule for a parent to follow.

In that remarkable Edgeworth family, where the children of one father by three different mothers dwelt together in harmony, and where, according to the daughter's record, "not one tear was shed a month," there was carried out systematically the government of love. The children felt themselves free, because the government was protective and not aggressive. They were guided, but never interfered with. From their earliest years they were taught the reason why certain requirements were necessary. If it was requisite for them to preserve certain boundaries in their playground, it was solely that the rights of others might not be infringed upon. Children appreciate the principle of "fair play"; and, if the aim of our training is, as it should be, the development in them of the power of self-control, they cannot be too early imbued with the sentiment of justice.— *From "Nursery Ethics," by Florence Hull Winterburn.*

[We should like to receive short articles on this subject and on any others interesting to mothers.]

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST AND THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

The subject of our lesson is so interesting that it seems worth while to quote some passages from Farrar bearing on it. Many writers, among them the commentator on the book of Acts in the "Cambridge Bible," take the view that the "gift of tongues" was a miraculous influence which enabled the disciples to speak in foreign languages without having learned them, this miracle being granted in order to assist them in their missionary work.

We have, however, here an instance of the help which may be received by using one part of the New Testament as a commentary on another. Our help in this instance is from Paul's words in regard to "tongues" and "prophecy" in 1 Cor. xiv. Farrar says, in regard to this: —

"The sole passage by which we can hope to understand it is the section of the First Epistle to the Corinthians to which I have just alluded (1 Cor. xii.–xiv. 33). It is impossible for any one to examine that section carefully without being forced to the conclusion that at Corinth, at any rate, the gift of tongues had not the least connection with foreign languages. Of such a knowledge, if this single passage of the Acts be not an exception, there is not the shadow of a trace in Scripture. That this passage is not an exception seems to be clear from the fact

that Saint Peter, in rebutting the coarse insinuation that the phenomenon was the result of drunkenness, does not so much as make the most passing allusion to an evidence so unparalleled ; and that the passage of Joel, of which he sees the fulfilment in the outpouring of Pentecost, does not contain the remotest hint of foreign languages. Hence the fancy that this was the immediate result of Pentecost is unknown to the first two centuries, and sprang up only when the true tradition had been obscured. The inference that the gift of unlearned languages was designed to help the apostles in their future preaching is one that unites a mass of misconceptions. In the first place, such a gift would be quite alien to that law of God's providence which never bestows on man that which man can acquire by his own unaided efforts. In the second place, owing to the universal dissemination at that time of Latin and Greek, there never was a period in which such a gift would have been more absolutely needless.* In the third place, though all other miracles of the New Testament found their continuance and their analogies for a time, at any rate, after the death of the apostles, there is no existing allusion, or even early legend, which has presumed the existence of this power. In the fourth place, although Paul spoke with a tongue (1 Cor. xiv. 18) more than all his converts, it is clear from the narrative of what occurred at Lycaonia that at a most crucial moment he did not understand the Lycaonian dialect. In the fifth place, early Christian tradition distinctly asserts that the apostles did not possess a supernatural knowledge of foreign tongues, since Papias tells us that Mark accompanied Saint Peter as an "interpreter," and Jerome that Titus was useful to Saint Paul, from his knowledge of Greek. We are therefore forced to look for some other aspect of the utterance of that inspiration which accompanied the heavenly signs of Pentecost. The mistaken explanation of it has sprung from taking too literally Saint Luke's dramatic reproduction of the vague murmurs of a throng who mistook the nature of a gift of which they witnessed the reality. I do not see how any thoughtful student, who has really considered the whole subject, can avoid the conclusion of Neander, that "any foreign languages which were spoken on this occasion were only something accidental, and not the essential element of the language of the Spirit."

In ancient times, especially before Origen, there seems to have been an impression that only one language was spoken, but that the miracle consisted in each hearer imagining it to be his own native tongue. The explanation is remarkable as showing an early impression that the passage had been misunderstood. The modern view, developed especially by Schneckenburger, following Saint Cyprian and Erasmus, is that the "tongue" was, from its own force and significance, intelligible equally to all who heard it. That such a thing is possible may be readily admitted, and it derives some probability from many analogies in the history of the Church. The stories of Saint Bernard, Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint Vincent Ferrer, Saint Louis Bertrand, Saint Francis Xavier, and others who are said to have been endowed with the spiritual power of swaying the passions, kindling the enthusiasm, or stirring the penitence of vast multitudes whom they addressed in a language unintelligible to the majority of the hearers, are so far from being inventions that any one who has been present at the speech of a great orator, though beyond the range of his voice, can readily understand the nature and the intensity of the effect produced. But neither of these theories taken alone seems adequate to account for the language used by Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Almost all the theories about the glossolalia are too partial. The true view can be discovered only by a combination. The belief that languages were used which were unknown, or only partially known, or which had only been previously known to the speaker; that the tongue was a mystic, exalted, poetic, unusual style of phraseology and utterance; that it was a dithyrambic outpouring of strange and rhythmic praise; that it was the impassioned use of ejacula-

* For instance, the whole multitude from fifteen countries, which heard the apostles speak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God, yet all understood the speech which Saint Peter addressed to them in Greek. Hence such a power of speaking unlearnt foreign languages would have been a "Luxus-wunder." Far different was it with the true glossolaly, which, in its controlled force, involved a spiritual power of stirring to its inmost depths the heart of unbelief (1 Cor. xiv. 22).

tory words and sentences of Hebrew Scripture; that it was a wild, unintelligible, inarticulate succession of sounds, which either conveyed no impression to the ordinary hearer or could only be interpreted by one whose special gift it was to understand the rapt and ecstatic strain,—none of these views is correct separately: all may have some elements of truth in their combination. This is the meaning of Saint Paul's expression "*kinds* of tongues." If we assume, as must be assumed, that the glossolalia at Corinth and elsewhere was identical with the glossolalia at Pentecost, then we must interpret the narrative of Saint Luke by the full and earnest discussion of the subject, written, be it remembered, at a far earlier period, and in immediate contact with, and even experience of, the manifestation by Saint Paul. That the glossolalia at Corinth was not a speaking in foreign languages is too clear to need proof. Saint Paul, in speaking of it, uses the analogies of the clanging of a cymbal, the booming of a gong (1 Cor. xiii. 1), the indistinct blare of a trumpet (xiv. 8), the tuneless strains of flute or harp (xiv. 7). We learn that, apart from interpretation, it was not for the edification of any but the speaker (1 Cor. xiv. 2); that even the speaker did not always understand it (xiv. 19); that it was sporadic in its recurrences (xiv. 27); that it was excited, inarticulate, astonishing (xiv. 2), intended as a sign to unbelievers rather than as an aid to believers, but even on unbelievers liable, when not under due regulation, to leave an impression of madness (xiv. 23); lastly, that, though controllable by all who were truly and nobly under its influence, it often led to spurious and disorderly outbreaks (xiv. 9, 11, 17, 20–23, 26–28, 33, 40). Any one who fairly ponders these indications can hardly doubt that, when the consciousness of the new power came over the assembled disciples, they did not speak as men ordinarily speak. The voice they uttered was awful in its range, in its tone, in its modulations, in its startling, penetrating, almost appalling power.* The words they spoke were exalted, intense, passionate, full of mystic significance. The language they used was not their ordinary and familiar tongue, but was Hebrew or Greek, or Latin or Aramaic, or Persian or Arabic, as some overpowering and unconscious impulse of the moment might direct. The burden of their thoughts was the ejaculation of rapture, of amazement, of thanksgiving, of prayer, of impassioned psalm, of dithyrambic hymn. Their utterances were addressed not to each other, but were like an inspired soliloquy of the soul with God. And among these strange sounds of many voices, all simultaneously raised in the accordance of ecstatic devotion,* there were some which no one could rightly interpret, which rang on the air like the voice of barbarous languages, and which, except to those who uttered them, and who in uttering them felt carried out of themselves, conveyed no definite significance beyond the fact that they were reverberations of one and the same ecstasy, echoes waked in different consciousnesses by the same immense emotion. Such, as we gather from the notices of Saint Luke, Saint Peter, and Saint Paul, was the "gift of tongues." And, thus regarded, its strict accordance with the known laws of psychology furnishes us with a fresh proof of the truthfulness of the history, and shows us that no sign of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit could have been more natural, more evidential, or more intense. — *Farrar's "Life and Work of Saint Paul," vol. i., Chap. v.*

(*To be continued.*)

(Address questions on New Testament Study to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.)

To have the feeling of being the affectionate and obedient child of God made alive in any human heart is a good. It is the *one good* of life. It is so vast and deep and wide and beautiful and comforting and satisfying a good that no other deserves to be mentioned in comparison.—*T. L. Huntington.*

*So we infer from Saint Paul's allusions, which find illustrations in modern analogies. Archdeacon Stopford describes the "unknown tongue" of the Irish revivalists in 1859 as "a sound such as I never heard before, unearthly and unaccountable."

*This simultaneity of utterance by people under the same impression is recorded several times in the Acts of the Apostles. It was evidently analogous to, though perhaps not identical with "tongues," the eloquence of religious transport, thrilling with rapture and conviction.

LETTER.

North Carolina, Aug. 12, 1897.

In an old copy of *The Cheerful Letter* I found a long list of books, and among them many that would be the means of doing much good here. The war left the people much impoverished, and there are those of refinement who are trying to educate their children, but have little money.

The caste system (feeling?) is so strong that the better class cannot send their children to the public school, as the town cannot pay a salary sufficient to employ a competent teacher.

A town meeting was called, a few evenings ago, to see about raising the school tax, in order to have more than three months' schooling in this mountain region. It was vetoed, as those having little cabins and a few acres of land would be obliged to pay forty cents extra, and they did not feel they could pay it; yet many of them have four and five children to educate.

I have a class in my house from 9 A.M. until 1 P.M., and last year had some poor children come at 4 P.M. Then evenings we had a night school for those unable to attend during the day. In my own class I have all denominations, but the night school was started by the rector of the Episcopal church.

(We shall write to this correspondent to send us a reference, and then her requests may be printed in *The Cheerful Letter*.)

Miss Cora H. Clarke had a great many requests for the book, "Queechy," offered in the July number. She had at that time only one copy, but after a good deal of effort succeeded in obtaining some more copies, and has now sent one to nearly every one who asked for the book, giving the first choice to those who live at a distance from towns and libraries.

Miss Cora H. Clarke, Magnolia, Mass., offers some copies of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush."

A good word is an easy obligation, but not to speak ill requires only our silence.—*Tillson.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

LITTLE TRAVELLERS.

Men often emigrate from a populous city into a new and open country, where they can find plenty of land to provide them with food, and will not be crowded by their neighbors.

It is also often necessary for seeds to leave the vicinity of the parent plant, and go where they will not be shaded by it, nor crowded by their brothers and sisters, but can find plenty of earth for their roots and sun for their leaves.

The man can reach a new locality by walking, riding on horseback, or going in a wagon or the cars. How does the seed perform its journey? There are a great many shapes and sizes of seeds. Do they all travel in the same way? If not, how many different methods are there? And which should you consider the best?

In this connection the question of how the seed alights from its journey is also one to be considered.

When you are sitting together in the twilight, ask each other these questions, and see which of you can mention the greatest variety of modes of seed dispersion, and how many kinds of seeds you can name that patronize each method. Or, if you have to write a composition at school and have no subject given you, take this subject, and you will find no difficulty of thinking of enough to say.

This is a good season of the year to begin a collection of seeds and seed pods, which last may be considered as the houses where the seeds live until they are fully developed and able to face the hardships of the outside world. Some seeds do not leave the seed-vessel at all, the whole pod coming off unopened from the parent plant. If such a seed-vessel contains only one seed, the latter so often completely fills up its cavity that, even on cutting a cross-section with your knife, you would find it difficult to distinguish it from a naked seed. Such a fruit is called an akene.

You can arrange your specimens in your collection according to the similarities of the seed-vessels, and you can give the places of honor to those species which you consider to be the best travellers. Perhaps some

botanical friend will name for you those which you do not know.—*C. H. Clarke, from Little Unity.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of our Treasurer after June 1 will be Miss Louise Howe, Nahant, Mass.; but subscriptions may be left for her at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at any time.

Notice of the first meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be given in the October number.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,—when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

Subscribers to *The Cheerful Letter* are kindly requested to send subscriptions to the *Treasurer*, not to the Editor.

In sending requests or offers of books, it is essential to address these communications to the *Book Club* (Secretary Mrs. W. B. Nichols). If addressed to the Editor these letters are in some cases postponed; in others altogether omitted. See directions in every number of *The Cheerful Letter.*

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, Nahant, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.